

AROUND THE WORLD WITH WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

Hindu India a Sink of Idolatry in Which the People Are Submerged Beneath a Multiplicity of Gods and the Weight of the Vicious System of Caste Prejudice

SUEZ, April 8.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—Before beginning the trip through the interior, a paragraph must be given to Indian travel. There are no Pullman sleepers in this country, and the tourist must carry his bedding with him. Night trains have compartments containing broad seats which can be used as couches and hanging shelves upon which one may lie. The traveler carries his own blanket, pillow, sheet, towels, soap, etc., and occasionally has to rely on these at hotels as well as on the trains. The cars are entered from the side, and one must take his chance of awaking at the right station, for there is no official to give him warning.

In India it is customary for foreigners to take an Indian servant with them, who acts as interpreter and looks after the baggage—and looking after baggage is no easy task in this part of the British empire. After we had made one short trip without assistance we were glad to yield to the custom, and Goolab, a Calcutta Musselman, proved himself an invaluable aid in dealing with the baggage coolies whose language we could not understand and whose charges varied from the legal rate as the minimum to three or four times that if the tourist shows himself a novice at the business.

One Time When Guide Books Are Right

The hotels of India are declared by the guide book to be bad, and one does not feel like disputing these authorities after having made the trip. I do not mean to say that there is no difference between them, for in several places we found comfortable rooms and in some places palatable food. Everywhere we were so interested in what we saw that we could endure almost any kind of accommodations, but at one place the fare was so unsatisfactory that we were reduced to eggs and toast. Goolab, overhearing some mutterings of discontent, took it upon himself to report in the hope of securing some improvement, and the clerk asked me for particulars. I told him that I had not intended to make any complaint, but that as he was good enough to inquire I would say that we did not like the cooking, that the crackers were sometimes mouse-eaten and that we found a worm in the cabbage. He thought that the mice were inexcusable, but, as if the question disposed of the matter, asked, "The worm was dead, wasn't it?" I was compelled to admit that it was.

Leaving Calcutta we sought the ancient city of Benares, which bears the distinction of being the center of Hinduism. In fact, it has been the religious capital of India for 2,000 years or more.

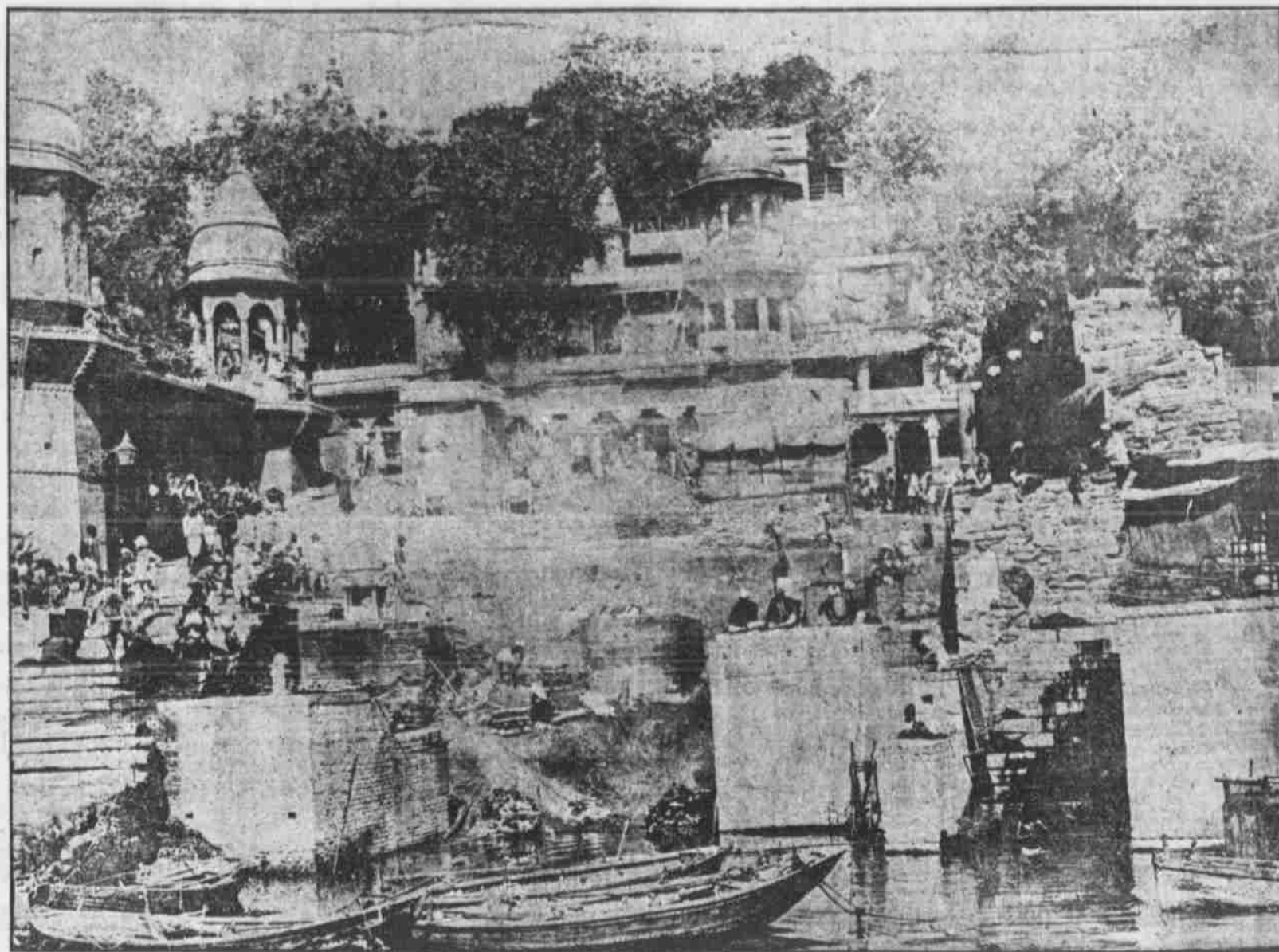
At Saranath, just outside Benares, stands the first Buddhist pagoda, said to have been erected nearly 500 years before the beginning of the Christian era to commemorate a spot in the deer park where Buddha taught his disciples. Recent excavations near there have brought to light one of the Asoka pillars which, though unfortunately broken, still bears testimony to the skill of the sculptor as well as to the zeal of the great Buddhist king. But these ruins are all there is left of Buddhism in this vicinity, where Buddha lived and taught, and where his doctrines were once triumphant, for Hinduism has virtually rooted out Buddhism, adopting, it is said, the device of making him one of the incarnations of their own god.

Benares a Sink of Idolatry

At Benares one sees idolatry in its grossest and most repulsive forms, and it is therefore as interesting today to the student of the world's religion as to the devoted Hindu who travels hundreds of miles over dusty roads to bathe in the Ganges, whose waters he considers sacred. Benares is built upon the north bank of the Ganges, and it is estimated that each year it is visited by 1,000,000 pilgrims. When more than 200 miles from the city we saw the caravan of one of the maharajas (maharaja is the title borne by the native princes) on its way to the river. There were five elephants, a dozen camels and twenty or thirty bullock carts besides numerous pack animals and horses. The trip could not be made in much less than two months, and all this for the sake of a bath in the waters of the sacred river!

The bank of the Ganges is lined for a long distance with bathing ghats (as the steps leading to the river are called), and at one point there is a burning ghat where the bodies of the dead are cremated. Cremation is universal among the Hindus, and sandal wood being used where the relatives can afford it. Taking a boat, as is customary, we rowed up and down the river in the early morning, and such a sight! Down the steps as far as the eye could reach came the bathers, men, women and children, and up the steps went a stream of those who had finished their ablutions. Most of them carried upon their heads water pots of shining brass and some carried bundles of wearing apparel. The bathing is done leisurely, as if according to a ritual with frequent dippings; water is poured out to the sun and prayers are said. The lame, the halt and the blind are there, some picking their way with painful step, others assisted by friends. Here, a leper sought healing in the stream; near him a man with emaciated form mixed his medicine with the holy water, and not far off a fakir with matted hair prayed beneath his big umbrella. On one of the piers a young man was cultivating psychic power by standing on one leg while he told his beads with his face toward the sun.

Dressing and undressing is a simple matter with the mass of the people. Men and women emerging from the water throw a clean robe around themselves and then unloosing the wet garment wring



BURNING Ghat ON THE GANGES AT BENARES.

it out and are ready to return. Those who bring water pots fill them from the stream out of which they have so recently come and carry them away, as if some divinity protected the water from pollution. As the river contains countless dead and receives the filth of the city as well as the flowers cast into it by worshippers, it requires a strong faith to believe it free from lurking disease and seeds of pestilence.

When we reached the burning ghat we found one body on the funeral pyre and another soaking in the water as a preparation for burning. So highly is the Ganges revered that aged people are brought there that they may die, if possible, in the water. While we were watching a third body was prepared for the burning, and it was so limp that death could not have occurred long before. While the flames were consuming those three corpses we saw coming down the steps a man carrying the body of a child, apparently about 2 years old, wrapped in a piece of thin cotton cloth. (The children of the poor are buried in the stream because of the cost of wood.) The man bore his lifeless burden to a little barge and made the corpse fast to a heavy stone slab. The boatman then pushed out from the shore and when the middle of the stream was reached the man in charge of the body dropped it overboard, and the burial was over.

Ganges a Never Forgotten Sight

No one has seen India until he has seen the Ganges; no one has seen the Ganges until he has seen it at Benares, and no one who has seen the Ganges at Benares will ever forget it.

In the suburbs of the city stands the Durga temple, better known as the Monkey temple, because it is the home of a large family of monkeys which are regarded as sacred. Photographs of the temple present rather an attractive appearance, but the original is anything but beautiful, and the monkeys and general filth of the place deprive it of all appearance of a place of worship.

The Golden Temple, however, is the one most visited by tourists, and it would be difficult to picture a less inviting place. The buildings are old and greasy and the narrow streets are filled with images and thronged with beggars. One finds his interest in missionary work quickened if he wanders through these streets and sees the offering of incense to the elephant god and the monkey god, and to images innumerable. The air is heavy with perfume and the odor of decaying flowers and one jostles against the sacred bulls as he threads his way through the crowd. We have not seen in any other land such evidences of superstition, such effort to ward off evil spirits and to conciliate idols. The educated Hindus, and there are many learned men among the Hindus, regard these idols

as only visible representations of an invisible God, but the masses seem to look no further than the ugly images before which they bow.

It was a relief to find near this dark pool of idolatry an institution of learning, recently founded, which promises to be a purifying spring. I refer to the Central Hindu college of which Mrs. Annie Besant, the well known theosophist, is the head. Although the school is but seven years old it already includes a valuable group of buildings and has some 500 students. Among the professors are several Englishmen who serve without compensation, finding sufficient reward in the consciousness of service.

Tradition of Underground River

Next to Benares, Allahabad is the most important Hindu center. The city is on the Ganges, at its junction with the Jumna, one of its longest branches. There is an old tradition that another river, flowing underground, empties into the Ganges at this point, and the place is referred to as the junction of the three rivers. The great Mogul Akbar built a splendid fort where the Ganges and the Jumna meet, and probably on this account Allahabad is the capital of the united provinces of Agra and Oudh. Within the walls of the fort there is another of the Asoka pillars, a very well preserved one, forty-nine feet high and bearing numerous inscriptions, among which are the famous edicts of Asoka, issued in 240 B. C. against the taking of life. Within the fort in a subterranean room is another object of interest, the Akshai Bar or undecaying banyan tree. As this tree is described by a Chinese pilgrim of the seventh century, it is either of remarkable antiquity or has been renewed from time to time.

The religious importance of Allahabad is largely due to a fair which is held there every year and which on every twelfth year becomes a national event. It is called the Mela and last January brought to the city a crowd estimated at from 1,500,000 to 3,000,000. This every twelfth-year fair brings together not only the devout Hindus, who come as a matter of religious duty, and innumerable traders who at such times find a market for their wares, but it draws large numbers of fakirs (pronounced 'fakkers', with the accent upon the last syllable) or holy men. They wear beads and long hair and no clothing except the breech cloth. They put ashes and even manure upon their heads, and their hair and whiskers are matted and discolored. These men are supposed to have raised themselves to a high spiritual state by asceticism and self-punishment. They undergo all sorts of hardships, such as hanging over a fire, holding up the arm until it withers and sitting

upon a bed of spikes. We saw many fakirs at Benares and Allahabad and some elsewhere (for they are scattered over the whole country), and at the latter place one accommodated us by taking his seat upon the spikes.

At the recent Mela 500 of these fakirs marched in a procession naked, even the breech cloth having been abandoned for the occasion, and so great was the reverence for them that their followers struggled to obtain the sand made sacred by their tread, a number of people meeting their death in the crowd. These fakirs are supposed to have reached a state of sinlessness, but one of them seized a child along the line of march and dashed out its brains in the presence of its mother, claiming to be advised that the gods desired a human sacrifice. He was arrested by the British officials and is now awaiting trial on the charge of murder. The papers recently reported another instance in which a fakir was the cause of murder. He was consulted by a woman who had lost several children and was anxious to protect her prospective child from a like fate. The fakir told her that she could insure her child's life if she would herself bathe in human blood, and she and her husband enticed a 7-year old boy into their home and killed him to secure the blood necessary for the bath. The fakirs are not only a danger to the community in some cases and a source of demoralization at all times, but they are a heavy drain upon the producing wealth of the country. Adding nothing to the material, intellectual or moral development of the country, they live upon the fears and credulity of the people.

The Hindu religion claims something more than 200,000,000 of human beings within its membership; it teaches the transmigration of the soul, or reincarnation as it is generally called. The Hindu mind takes kindly to the metaphysical, and the Hindu priests have evolved an intricate system of philosophy in support of their religious beliefs. Reincarnation is set forth as a theory necessary to bring God's plans into accord with man's conception of justice. If a man is born blind or born into unfavorable surroundings it is explained on the theory that he is being punished for sins committed during a former existence; if he is born into a favorable environment he is being rewarded for virtue previously developed.

Gods and the Caste System

It is not quite certain whether the Hindus have many gods or many forms of one god, for the ancient Vedas speak of each of several gods as if they were supreme. The most popular god is a sort of trinity, Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the preserver, and Shiva, the destroyer, being united in one. Sometimes the trinity is spoken of as representing creation, destruction and renovation, in which Krishna appears as the principal god. Out of this system have sprung a multitude of gods until the masses bow down "to stocks and stones."

The most pernicious product of the Hindu religion is the caste system. Infant marriage is terrible, but that will succumb to education; the seclusion of the women is benumbing, but it will give way before the spread of European and American influence, and with it will go the practical servitude of widows, as the practice of suttee (the burning of widows) has practically gone. But caste system, resting upon vanity and pride and egotism, is difficult to eradicate. Nowhere in the world is caste so inextricably in its demands or so degrading in its influence. The line between the human being and the beast of the field is scarcely as distinctly drawn than the line between the various castes. The Brahmins belong to the priestly class and are supposed to have sprung from the mouth of Brahma, the great creator; the Kshatriyas, warrior class, are supposed to have sprung from the shoulders of Brahma; the Vaisya, or merchant class, are supposed to have sprung from the thighs of Brahma, while the Sudras, or laborers, are supposed to have sprung from the feet of Brahma. There are numerous subdivisions of these castes, and besides these there are outcasts, although there does not seem to be any room below the Sudra for any other class. The caste system not only affects social intercourse and political progress, but it complicates living. A high caste Hindu cannot accept food or drink from a low caste and must purify his water bottle if a low caste touches it.

Reforms Now in Progress

About seventy years ago a reform in Hinduism was begun under the name of Brahma Somaj. It was built upon monotheism, or the worship of one god, for which it claimed to find authority in the Hindu sacred books. It drew to itself a number of strong men, among them Mr. Tagore and Mr. Sen, the latter making a trip to England to present the principles of the new faith before prominent religious bodies there.

The Arya Somaj, another reform sect, sprung up later. Both of these have exerted considerable influence upon the thought of India, far beyond their numerical strength. So far, however, Christianity has made greater inroads upon Hinduism than any of the reformations that have been attempted from within.

At Allahabad we found two Christian colleges, the Allahabad Christian college for men and the Wananaker school for girls. Dr. A. H. Ewing is at the head of the former and Miss Foreman, the

(Continued on Page Eight.)

Edward Rosewater Describes Canonization of a New Saint at Rome

Scene at St. Peters When His Holiness Beatified the Venerable Julie Billiard, a French Woman of Exceeding Piety, Whose Good Works Are Still Remembered of Men

ROME, May 22.—(Editorial Correspondence.)—Owing to the strained relations subsisting between the Vatican and Quirinal members of the International Congress had been politely advised that no audience with the pope would be granted them until after the adjournment of the congress. Inasmuch as the pope did not officiate at St. Peters on Easter Sunday, as was formerly the custom, my first opportunity to see Pius X did not present itself until last Sunday, during a ceremony of beatification. By courtesy of Father J. S. Meyer, English assistant to the general of the Society of Jesus, who, by the way, is a native of St. Louis and a devoted American, I was the recipient of a ticket that entitled the bearer to a reserved seat on the tribune of the basilica of St. Peters. The ticket bore the following inscription in Italian:

SOLENN BEATIFICATION
of the Venerable Servant of God
JULIE BILLIARD
Founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady,
Sunday, May 20, 1906. For the Afternoon Function.
THE MAJOR DOMO OF HIS HOLINESS.
The basilica will open at 3:30 p. m. The sacred function will begin precisely at 5:30 p. m. Entrance at the door of St. Martha. Ladies are requested to wear black dress and black veil. Gentlemen black coat, white cravat.
Applause or acclamation forbidden; also the display in the basilica of banners or emblems.

The beatification and canonization of saints is unknown to any other than the Roman Catholic church. Before proceeding to the solemn act the church takes infinite pains to trace the career and authenticity of acts of benevolence, pious devotion and miraculous attributes of those upon whom the honor conferred upon martyrs of primitive Christianity is invoked. According to a very ancient custom the Roman pontiff alone is vested with authority to canonize the beatification and canonization of saints. The preliminary ceremonies of the beatification of the venerable Julie Billiard, which took place in the Vatican basilica in the forenoon, were conducted by

Cardinal Tripepi, pro-prefect of the sacred congregation, assisted by thirteen other cardinals and thirty archbishops and consultants. To these ceremonies everybody was admitted, while admission to the papal function was by card.

Accompanied by a member of the editorial staff of the Civiltà Cattolica, who is thoroughly versed in the rites of the church, knows every nook and corner of St. Peters, and, moreover, enjoyed the acquaintance of Cardinal Sarto years before he became Pius X, I drove up the grand colonnade that connects the Vatican with St. Peters, reaching the door of St. Martha about ten minutes after it had been thrown open. The passage was blocked by carriages and autos and a perfect jam of men and women, civilians, uniformed soldiers, priests, monks and nuns wedging their way into the corridor lined by gaudily uniformed Swiss guards, who vainly tried to hold back the surging mass. Most of these people knew that the first-comers would secure the best seats, hence the unseemly scramble.

Wonderful Scene in St. Peters

It was a never to be forgotten spectacle. The greater half of St. Peters, including the vast dome, was brilliantly lighted by more than 6,000 electric lamps and gas jets emitted through porcelain candles artistically grouped and suspended from magnificent candelabra. Above the main altar, surrounded by a cluster of large five-pointed electric stars, was a transparent painting representing the new saint, with angels' features in the attitude of heavenward ascension. The basilica was superbly draped in crimson and gold expressly for the occasion, and a number of large paintings representing incidents in the life of Julie Billiard were hung within the radius of the enclosure reserved for the pope and prelates participating in the function. One of these paintings represented the new saint ministering to the wounded on the battlefield of Waterloo. The enclosure erected in the center of the basilica for the papal court, extending from the great bronze pillars under the dome to the apse, was constructed of crimson damask covered benches on each side of the paralcogram, for occupancy by the cardinals, archbishops, bishops, prelates, monsignors and heads of religious orders.

Back of these benches were several tiers of chairs reserved for members of the diplomatic corps and distinguished guests. From this viewpoint I was in position to survey the great assemblage, and the pageant was the most impressive I ever gazed on.

Waiting for His Holiness

An hour before the papal procession had entered every seat was filled. Fully 200 members of the Palatine Guard, composed of knights and chevalliers of the Order of Malta, in Spanish court costume, with lace cuffs and ruffles, gold chains and short swords, acted as ushers. They were assisted in maintaining order and decorum by the Noble Guards, in dashing uniforms and centurion helmets. Quite apart from the multi-colored and ornamental uniforms and regalia there was a sprinkling of bejeweled, gold-laced and bestarred ambassadors and diplomatic representatives. In the balcony reserved for Roman patriots were many high bred women, in fashionable, flashy attire, unmindful of the restriction that directed them to appear in black only.

In a niche near the high altar a small group of quietly dressed women were pointed out as the sisters and near relatives of his holiness. Presently a buzz was heard in the colonnade leading from the Vatican to the basilica; the noise grew louder and louder and then came the clapping of many hands and cheers, in defiance of the express orders of the papal major domo. As the papal procession entered the pope, borne by six stalwart courtiers, waved down the cheering crowd with his hands with apparent displeasure over the demonstration. At this juncture every man and woman in the tribune rose and craned their necks to get the first glimpse. The cortege was preceded by the papal cross. His holiness was escorted by his Noble Guards in full regalia. Borne aloft in the gilded but by no means too ornamental chair, dressed in elegant and spotless white, with the insignia of his holy office, but without the tiara, Pius X, with his hand extended blessing the people, seemed to exert a benign spell over the assemblage. His white hair, bronzed features and open countenance created the impression of a venerable, dignified and yet simple man, who, although realizing his exalted

position, does not want to be worshiped and dislikes all ostentation and display. That is the reputation, both among high officials and laymen who have come in contact with him.

Of the twenty-six cardinals who participated in the solemn function four who had been competitors for the succession were pointed out to me, viz: Cardinals Rampolla, Gotti, Vanutelli and Satolli.

At the conclusion of the function the pope remounted the sedia gestatoria and proceeded to the Chapel of the Holy Sacrament, with the ceremonial in the same order as on his entry.

Life of the New Saint

The new saint, Julie Billiard, was born in Cuvilly, France, in 1750 and died at Amiens in 1816. Her parents were in moderate circumstances and Julie was obliged to earn her own livelihood at the age of 7. A shock produced by the attempted assassination of her father produced a nervous malady that kept her an invalid for twenty-two years. Although suffering excruciating pain, her resignation caused persons who had recourse to her advice and prayers to call her the saint of Cuvilly. During the uprising that followed the French revolution she came near being immolated, and fright caused the loss of speech. A vision, in which Jesus on the Cross of Calvary comforted her in her affliction, inspired her with the desire to devote her life to religious instruction, and eventually founded the order of the Sisters of Our Lady, which institution concerned itself with the Christian education of girls. In 1794 she was transferred to Amiens, where she recovered her speech. She took her first vows in 1804, and soon after a mission was given Julie Billiard. She was elected superior general. During her lifetime the congregation established itself in several French cities and may now be found on the shores of the Atlantic and Pacific, the Congo and the Zambesi territories. In 1816 Julie Billiard assisted and nursed the wounded on the battlefield of Waterloo. She died the following year, at the age of 65. These particulars, gleaned from the pamphlet distributed at St. Peters prior to the ceremony, give an outline of the life and service of the new saint.

E. ROSEWATER.